



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Policies¹

I. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Animal Care and Use Committee (FWP –ACUC) is to facilitate use of free-ranging wildlife in Montana for scientific study in accordance with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal Welfare Act and State of Montana laws governing the care of wildlife handled for study and management.

The Animal Welfare Act was signed into law in 1966. While its original intent was to regulate the care and use of animals in the laboratory, it has been amended to include regulation of treatment for animals in research, exhibition, transport, and trade. The Act has been amended four times (1970, 1976, 1985, 1990) and can be found in United States Code, Title 7, Sections 2131 to 2156. Montana State Law states that the care and wellbeing of wild animals must be considered when used for research or in management actions. According to Sec. 87-2-806, Montana State Law provides for denial of permit for any of the following:

- The applicant is not qualified to make the scientific investigation;
- The proposed collecting is not necessary for the proposed scientific investigation;
- The method of collecting is not appropriate;
- The proposed collecting may threaten the viability of the species; or
- There is no valid reason or need for the proposed scientific investigation.

The purpose of this committee is to provide oversight for procedures used to capture and handle wildlife during scientific study and management activities in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act and State law. Although exhibition, transport and trade are mentioned in the Act they fall outside the purview of this particular committee. This committee was established to review projects involving mammalian, avian and amphibian species. The FWP-ACUC will be used in conjunction with the FWP Scientific Collectors Permit screening process to review requests to study and/or capture wildlife in Montana

¹ 2nd Draft. Authored by Neil Anderson, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, 1400 South 19th Ave, Bozeman, MT 59718. Modified from original draft authored by Mark Atkinson and Neil Anderson.

Approval of a project by the FWP-ACUC does not supersede other permit processes. Additional approval may be necessary prior to initiation of a project. Please consult the FWP Wildlife Division in Helena for further information on the FWP permit process.

II. Committee Structure and Organization

A. Membership

The committee will consist of 3-6 members selected from the following:

- FWP Wildlife Lab Supervisor – Chairperson*
- FWP Chief of Research and Technical Services*
- FWP Wildlife Veterinarian*
- External Member of the Public*
- FWP Regional Game Manager – Determined by location of study
- Other External Party - designated by the Chairperson

All committee members must be appointed or approved by the Wildlife Division Administrator. The presence of the Veterinarian, External Member of the Public and either the Wildlife Lab Supervisor or Chief of Research and Technical Services is required for the review process to be valid. *The Chairperson, Chief of Research and Technical Services, Wildlife Veterinarian and External Scientific Professional will be permanent members of the committee. In the absence of these individuals the Wildlife Division Administrator can appoint an appropriate substitute.

Appropriate consultants may be asked to participate in evaluating proposals, but will not be voting members of the committee.

B. Meetings

- Meetings will be scheduled as needed based on project requests and availability of FWP-ACUC members.
- Meetings will be held at the FWP Region 3 headquarters unless otherwise specified.
- Minutes will be recorded and maintained by a designated committee member.
- Information regarding project requests will be kept confidential until appropriate persons are notified.
- An annual report of FWP-ACUC activities will be prepared by the Chairperson and presented to the FWP Wildlife Division Administrator.
- The Chairperson will keep official copies of project requests, committee recommendations, letters of approval/denial and project results.

III. Review Process

A. Application for Research Proposals

1. The Primary Investigator will complete a Project Request Form in its entirety.
2. Project Request Forms and FWP-ACUC guidelines are available from the Chairperson in digital format.
3. Completed Project Request Forms are to be emailed or delivered to the Chairperson in digital format.
4. Supporting information such as project proposals may accompany the Request Form but will not be accepted in lieu of the Request Form.

B. Application for Internal Management Protocols

1. The Primary Investigator will complete a Project Request Form.
2. Project Request Forms and FWP-ACUC guidelines are available from the Chairperson in digital format.
3. Completed Project Request Forms are to be emailed or delivered to the Chairperson in digital format.
4. A digital version of the Internal Management Protocol must accompany the Project Request Form.

C. Classification of Requests

1. Category 1

Non-invasive or minimally invasive procedures that require physical restraint for a short duration (e.g. ultrasound exam; palpation; injections; blood collection; radio collaring etc.)

2. Category 2

Non-invasive or minimally invasive procedures that require tranquilization and/or anesthesia (e.g. radio collaring; ultrasound exam; tissue collections; etc.)

3. Category 3

Minimally invasive or surgical procedures that require anesthesia (e.g. intraperitoneal implantation of radio telemetry devices)

4. Exemptions

Specific projects may be granted an exemption if they fall into the following criteria

- Projects have been previously reviewed and approved by a credible animal care and use committee other than the FWP-ACUC.
 - An exemption will be granted following review of the non-FWP animal care and use committee findings by the Wildlife Division Administer or his appointed representative.
 - A review by the FWP-ACUC may be required if determined that the findings do not adequately address FWP's animal welfare concerns.
- Bird banding operations that are operated under approved and current federal permits and follow federal protocols and guidelines.
 - Additional permits from FWP may be required.
- Rehabilitation centers or educational centers that operate under approved and current federal permits, follow federal protocols and guidelines and can demonstrate veterinary oversight of the facility and operations.
 - Additional permits from FWP may be required.
- Sample collection of non-vertebrate species.
 - Approval from managing authority may be required
- Non-invasive collection of non-living material such as fecal material, urine, tissue samples from carcasses and behavioral observations
 - Approval from managing authority may be required.

D. Evaluation Criteria

The FWP-IACUC will evaluate requests based on the following criteria with the emphasis on the suitability of the request as it relates to animal welfare issues:

1. Scientific merit (as it relates to animal welfare and appropriateness of study design)
2. Resource commitment (animals; personnel; equipment; funds - are they suitable to insure animal welfare)
3. Effect on animal (degree of stress in relation to project justification; conflict with ongoing studies; appropriate methodologies)

E. Project Review

1. Expedited Review

Category 1 requests will receive a committee review through evaluation of presented written material unless the Chairperson or a majority of the FWP-ACUC members call for a full review. The Primary Investigator will be notified of the review process.

2. Full Review

Category 2 and 3 requests will receive a full review. **A full review requires the presence of the Primary Investigator** and consists of a presentation/discussion of the proposed study with the FWP-ACUC and evaluation of written material. Committee members may have additional questions or requests during the review.

3. Review Process

- a. The Chairperson will distribute electronic copies of the Project Request Form and any accompanying material.
- b. Applicable criteria, as related to project classification, will be used to evaluate each project request.
- c. The project may be approved or disapproved as written by a majority vote of the FWP-ACUC.
- d. Project requests may be approved with modifications (as deemed fit by the FWP-ACUC) by a majority vote of the FWP-ACUC.
- e. Modifications of the request may be required by the FWP-ACUC prior to voting on approval of the request.
- f. All requested modifications must be made to the Project Request Form.
- g. Any FWP-ACUC member with a conflict of interest (i.e. principle investigator, author of management protocols, etc.) will not vote on approval of the request.
- h. The Chairperson shall notify the Primary Investigator of the FWP-ACUC action in writing.
- i. If the committee withholds approval, a statement giving the basis for the decision will be included with the notification.

IV. Monitoring of Approved Projects

A. Sample collection

1. Copies of all sample collection sheets will be forwarded to the Regional Game Manager by the investigator.
2. Any problems with animal captures or sample collection will be reported to the Chairperson immediately.
3. A Post-capture Questionnaire must be submitted to the Chairperson after capture operations.

B. Project Status

1. For short-term project (less than one year) the Primary Investigator will provide a project summary to the Regional Game Manager, Wildlife Division Administrator and the Chairperson at the conclusion of the project.

2. For long-term projects (more than one year) the Primary Investigator will contact the Regional Game Manager at regular intervals (determined by the Regional Game Manager) regarding the status of the project.
3. An annual report must be submitted to the Wildlife Division Administrator, Regional Game Manager and Chairperson.
4. A project may be terminated if it is not conducted in accordance with applicable provisions of the Animal Welfare Act, Montana State Law, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks or the FWP-ACUC guidelines.
5. If the project will exceed the stated completion date, a written proposal requesting continuation of the project must be submitted to the FWP-ACUC for review.
6. The FWP-ACUC must be notified in writing of any significant change from stated protocols. Deviation from FWP-ACUC approved protocols may result in retraction of approval and warrant resubmission of the project for review.

C. Publication of Results

1. For internal projects, a copy of the resulting manuscript, communication or abstract must be submitted to the FWP-ACUC for review.
2. For external projects, a copy of all resulting publications must be forwarded to the FWP Wildlife Division Administrator (Wildlife Division, PO Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620), the Regional Game Manager and the FWP-ACUC Chairperson.
3. Publications must either list appropriate FWP personnel as co-authors or acknowledge Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the appropriate staff.

I hereby acknowledge that I have reviewed the above guidelines and approve of the implementation of these guidelines by the FWP-ACUC for anyone (internal or external to FWP) wishing to study, capture or handle wildlife managed under the authority of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

Ken McDonald
Wildlife Division Administrator

Date